

March 03, 2013

News Release

For Immediate Release

Missouri Bird Artist David Plank Exhibit at Art Museum

The Springfield Art Museum, located at 1111 W. Brookside, will exhibit watercolors and drawings by Missouri bird artist, David Plank, beginning March 9, 2013. This exhibit honors and celebrates Plank's passion and dedication to his favorite subject, birds of the Ozarks. About 60 drawings and watercolors from the Museum's permanent collection will be on view in addition to thirteen more recent watercolors on loan from the artist.

An opening reception hosted by the Friends of the Springfield Art Museum (FOSAM) will take place at 5:30 p.m., Friday, March 8 at the Museum. A catalogue will be available for sale. The artist will sign catalogues at the opening reception as well as give a gallery talk at 6 p.m. that evening in the galleries.

A companion exhibit will be mounted in an adjacent gallery briefly discussing the history of ornithological painting as well as the symbolism of birds in art. This exhibit will include work by John James Audubon, Walton Ford, Robert Lostutter, Warren Taylor and Camille Randal.

A native of Salem, Missouri, David Plank began painting birds as a young child in the early 1940s and continues to produce new works today. Beginning with pencil drawings of each bird in their natural habitat, David then translates his clean and precise style to transparent watercolor, bringing each bird to life. His passion for birds has resulted in the creation of more than 1200 watercolors, hundreds of finished drawings and thousands of field drawings. According to Plank, "the visual language of a painting is my attempt at expressing how I see and feel about birds, nature and life."

Plank is a self-taught artist. After spending three years in the Army and eleven years as an offset pressman and lithographer, Plank became a full-time artist in 1973. He has produced cover paintings for over sixteen issues of "Bird Watcher's Digest" and multiple issues of "Missouri Conservationist" magazine. He served as artist and illustrator for two books: "Arkansas Birds – Their Distribution and Abundance" and "The Birds of Missouri – Their Distribution and Abundance." He has had a number of paintings accepted into Watercolor USA, the National Art League Show in New York and the international art show "Birds in Art," at the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Museum in Wasuau, Wisconsin.

Although the basis of each of Plank's paintings is a field drawing of the bird in their natural habitat, Plank differs from most wildlife painters, who prefer a strict representation of nature, in the sense that he also imbues each bird with his own personality, placing himself into the painting through modifications of color and value. This is especially true with songbirds where Plank enhances the natural colors of each bird to make their presence brighter and more colorful. According to Plank, "the subjective approach, along with sketching birds in the field, assures

more originality and inspires more painting ideas than if I were simply attempting to duplicate the physical bird."

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